to Rajasthan SLDB by the time the final claims were lodged with NABARD. Thus there has been no delay on the part of NABARD in reimbursing the claims lodged by Rajasthan SCB and SLDB. Further, there is no provision in the ARDR scheme to compensate banks for loss due to delay in the settlement of claims.

[English]

FMs Foreign Visit

534. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH :
SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item caption "FMs Russian visit comes a cropper" appearing in 'Pioneer' dated October 9, 1997;

(b) if so, whether Russia continued to insist on payments only in hard currency for the supply of Reactors;

(c) if so, whether the Government have agreed to accept these terms;

(d) if so, the present status of the existing agreement for construction of nuclear Reactors for the Kudankulam Power Project in Tamil Nadu;

(e) the details of the other discussions held with Russian authorities; and

(f) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Russia has indicated a preference for repayment of the Russian credit for the Kudankulam project to be in freely repartriable hard currency. The terms and conditions of the Russian credit, including the modalities of repayment thereof, are under discussion between the two Governments.

(d) Once the finance issues under discussion are settled between the two Governments, a Supplement to the inter-Governmental Agreement of 1988 is expected to be concluded, paving the way for the preparation by the Russian sides of a detailed project report (DPR) for the Kudankulam Project

(e) and (f) Finance Minister visited Russia on October 5–8, 1997 for the inter-sessional discussions between the two co-Chairmen of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission, and held wide ranging discussions with the Russian co-Chairman, First Deputy Prime Minister Mr. A. Chubais, and with Mr. M.E. Fradkov, the Minister for Foreign Economic Relations and Trade of the Russian Federation, over issues of bilateral trade, economic, cultural and scientific and technical cooperation. The status of implementation of the decisions of the last session of the inter-Governmental Commission, held in Moscow in February, 1997 was reviewed. A detailed calendar for the meetings of the bilateral Working Groups and Sub-Groups in the areas of Banking and Finance, Power and Non-conventional Energy sources, Environment and Natural Resources, Metallurgy, Petroleum, Information Technology, Culture, Science and Technology, Transport and Trade and Economic Cooperation, was also finalised in the run-up to the Fourth session of the inter-Governmental Commission, to be held in New Delhi from Novemeber 27–29, 1997.

Import of Dispensable Medical Care Devices

535. SHRI SUKHDEO PASWAN :
SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the annual average of import of disposable medical care devices alongwith its value;

(b) the reasons for resorting to the imports of these medical care products;

(c) the impact of the import of such devices on the indigenous Products; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to encourage indigenous manufacturers?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) The estimated value of import of disposable medical care devices such a syringes, sutures & needles, catheters, cannula during the years 1996–97 was Rs. 89 crores.

(b) considering that the best medical facilities should be available to the people, the medical care products are placed under open general licence.

(c) and (d) Under the new industrial policy announced in 1991 and further policy measures taken, indigenous manufacturers are free to take investment decisions including those relating to technology transfer and foreign equity participation to make their product globally competitive.

IMF Recommendation

536. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the International Monetary Fund has unveiled new recommendations for India including tax restructuring and reduction of expenditure, and to bring down